



Commonwealth of Massachusetts
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF HOUSING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
MASSACHUSETTS OFFICE OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT
136 BLACKSTONE STREET, 5TH FLOOR
BOSTON, MA 02109

Fiscal Year 2022 Grant Proposal
Regional Economic Development Organization Grant Program

RFP Release Date: Aug 26, 2021 at 12 p.m.

Proposal Deadline: September 30, 2021 by 4:00 p.m.
Late applications will not be accepted.

Email proposal to: Nhat.Le@mass.gov
Cc: Applicable MOBD Regional Director.

Fiscal Year 2022 Grant Proposal

Regional Economic Development Organization Grant Program

Announcement and Overview

The Massachusetts Office of Business Development is accepting proposals for the Regional Economic Development Organization (REDO) Grant Program for Fiscal Year 2022. MOBD is seeking proposals from eligible organizations as defined in M.G.L. Chapter 23A, Section 3K to collaborate with MOBD to support the businesses in the Commonwealth, aligning with the Commonwealth's *Economic Development Plan – Partnership for Growth and Partnership for Recovery*, including but not limiting to, supporting regionally-based efforts to nurture and facilitate economic growth and prosperity in the Commonwealth.

Due to the substantial increase in funding this fiscal year (2022), we ask that the applicants consider partnerships outside of their organization to maximize impact across their regions. REDOs are strongly encouraged to include partner's projects within the region in a separate attachment to be included along with the traditional request for funding.

REDOs are to continue to provide services as detailed by M.G.L Chapter 23A, Section 3K and as revised in Acts of 2016, Chapter 219, section 9. MOBD will continue to prioritize well-defined proposals on the strategy and action plan to assist entrepreneurs, small businesses, and business partners. Applications with one or more proposed projects from any new or existing partners must be clearly defined in the roles, scope/budget, and impact to the region.

Grant applications should define the communities they serve, the strategy and marketing plan to reach these communities, current and planned programs, and performance benchmarks with metrics. The grant is intended to supplement the organization's current and anticipated funding and not to be the primary funding source. Other funding sources and uses must be disclosed in the REDO application.

For FY2022, MOBD hopes to see more partnerships formed to deliver positive economic outcomes through projects. The applicant may demonstrate how the organization supports businesses and communities in stabilizing and/or growing their regional economy with one or more of the recovery efforts under Partnerships for Recovery: Get Massachusetts Back to Work, Support Small Business, Revitalize Downtowns, or Foster Innovation.

Eligibility

- Eligible organizations shall be corporations, foundations, organizations or institutions that are exempt from federal taxation under section 501(c) of the Internal Revenue Code.
- Eligible organizations shall have a primary focus on economic development and perform the services required by MGL Chapter 23A Section 3J and 3K, as amended by sections 8 and 9 of Chapter 219 of the Acts of 2016 – see both *Governance* below.
- Eligible organization must operate regionally and service 10 or more contiguous cities/towns with interrelated economic assets.

- The applicant engages primarily in activities intended to promote job and business retention, creation and attraction across all industry sectors within its identified region.
- The applicant has a history of collaboration with the area business community, local officials, economic development organizations, higher education institutions and other public and private organizations within the identified region. The applicant must describe a plan for a formal program encouraging participation in activities by a wide variety of organizations, governments and businesses operating in the identified region.
- The applicant has received or has commitments to receive substantial financial and in-kind support from private resources or member municipalities.
- The applicant is capable of and agrees to provide services to the entire region identified in the application.

Ineligible Organizations

- Governmental regional entities, which serve as regional or district planning commissions under M.G.L. Chapter 40B.
- Regional employment boards.
- Tourism councils under M.G.L. Chapter 23A § 14.
- Entities that are a political subdivision of a municipality or wholly owned by a municipality.

Use of Funds

- Funding may not be used to increase salaries or hire additional staff for the organization. Sub-contracting is allowed for project implementation.
- No more than 10% of the REDO grant can be used for the grantee's overhead costs which are not specifically related to REDO activities allowable pursuant to M.G.L. Ch. 23A § 3K.
- This grant is intended to improve service delivery for the benefit of the Massachusetts business community.
- Grant funds from the REDO Grant Program cannot be used to subsidize non-REDO operating costs.
- Organizations are required to list other funding sources on the application. Please disclose:
 1. The origin and amount of the funding;
 2. Detailed budgets and accounting documents for REDO grant funds to differentiate spending from each source of funding; and
 3. If applicable, describe any initiatives that are planned to be jointly funded through the REDO Grant and another public funding source.

Selection process and criteria

The review committee will review and score the grant applications and at its sole discretion contract with individual organizations and/or regional partnerships that demonstrate an ability to utilize grant funds to improve upon the region's economic competitiveness. Proposals must demonstrate the ability to meet the following in order to receive funding:

- 15 points - Provide a strategy and a clear action plan to address business needs in the region that would result strong impact and outcome.
- 10 points - Demonstrate that organization/partnership understands the region's strengths and opportunities and has the capacity in providing services to the entire region identified in the proposal.
- 10 points - Demonstrate the value added of the funding to the organization and region in an organized, well-written and complete grant proposal; and how it aligns with the Commonwealth's economic development plan *Partnership for Growth*;
- 20 points - Demonstrate that services would serve the small businesses; plan to refer businesses to MOBD.
- 20 points - Have a detailed and reasonable budget, executable and measurable metrics, and a clear timeline for services outlined in the proposal
- 20 points - Have a strong record of committed partnership and collaboration either among partners and/or with MOBD to carry out and complete the proposal.
- 5 points - will be for the demographics make up for the coverage area.

The Massachusetts Office of Business Development reserves the right to require, as a condition of a grant of funds, that two or more organizations with significant overlap in service areas or initiatives create a regional partnership to ensure substantial coverage.

Contract and Payment

If the proposal is accepted for funding, disbursement of grant funds is subject to the execution of a contract with the grantee. The application and grant proposal narrative shall become the basis for MOBD's contract negotiations with the applicant to determine the precise scope of work, budget, and use of funds. All documents deemed necessary by MOBD will be revised from the grant proposal and incorporated into the contract as attachments, including a scope of work submitted by the Grantee and approved by MOBD.

Grant Program Reporting

Organizations shall submit quarterly and annual reports in the provided templates.

- Activity report template (excel) should be submitted quarterly and can be submitted jointly or separately. This report should include type business assistance to companies, the identification of diverse businesses, number of jobs created and/or retained, events hosted, and meetings with partners and regional directors.
- Final report (PowerPoint) should feature business support along with job numbers, communities, business success stories, partner organizations and regional areas of concern.

- It is expected that important regional highlights will be communicated in real-time to the MOBD Main Office or Regional Offices.
- Any additional documents that exhibit and support the work being completed by the REDO in the region are welcomed, but not required.

Governance: REDO Services Required by M.G.L Section 3K (c) of Chapter 23A

Contracts for services entered into under this section shall include, but not be limited to, the following required services to be performed by the organization on behalf of the commonwealth

(i) act as the primary contact for businesses seeking assistance from state or local governments, including those seeking to locate within the region or expand existing operations;

(ii) identify public funding sources for business activity and provide assistance in accessing public tax incentive programs;

(iii) identify potential sites for business development and maintain an inventory of key development parcels;

(iv) market the identified region in coordination with the Massachusetts marketing partnership established under section 13A and in compliance with the marketing materials developed by the partnership;

(v) furnish advice and assistance to businesses and industrial prospects which may locate in the region, existing businesses and industries and persons seeking to establish new businesses or industries and engage in related activities;

(vi) establish and maintain a network of public and private expertise related to regional assets, industry clusters, workforce and education opportunities and public tax and regulatory incentive and capital access programs;

(vii) partner with the Massachusetts office of business development representative to the region and representatives of quasi-public agencies and authorities engaged in economic development activities to exchange information and jointly provide direct consultation with businesses seeking to expand or locate to the region;

(viii) act as the primary contact for the region for a business seeking state assistance and incentives in a location decision;

(ix) in partnership with the staff of the Massachusetts office of business development, assist member municipalities with economic development efforts related to business attraction and retention and with access to state economic development programs; and

(x) submit an annual report to the Massachusetts office of business development on the business development activities conducted under the contract. The report shall include: a summary of the preceding year's program activities, objectives and accomplishments; a description of how the programs and marketing strategy conducted under the contract align with the commonwealth's overall economic development and strategies; an analysis of how the contracting organization's involvement in promotion activities has generated prospective business expansion and relocation clients; and a summary of its efforts to obtain funds from local, private and federal sources.

Governance: REDO Services Required by Section 9 of Chapter 219 of the Acts of 2016

Contracts for services entered into under this section shall include, but not be limited to, the following required services to be performed by the regional economic development organizations on behalf of the commonwealth:

- (i) assessing regional competitive strengths, weaknesses and opportunities;
- (ii) representing the regional business community in long-range workforce skills pipeline planning efforts to ensure robust skills and talent pipelines that meet regional needs;
- (iii) representing the regional business community in collaborative, long-range workforce skills, transportation and land use planning;
- (iv) promoting regionally significant industry clusters;
- (v) promoting connections across sectors of the regional economy;
- (vi) maintaining an inventory of key development parcels;
- (vii) marketing the region in coordination with the Massachusetts Marketing Partnership established under section 13A; and
- (viii) furnishing advice and assistance to businesses and industrial prospects which may locate in the region.